


Marshland Rural District Council.



Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1938.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Marshland Rural District
Council :—*

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report, the contents of which are set out in accordance with Circular 1728 (England) of the Ministry of Health :—

GENERAL REMARKS ; AND FEATURES OF SPECIAL INTEREST.

Despite certain individual variations on the previous year, the Health indices for Marshland compare very favourably with those of England and Wales as a whole, over the same period.

Although the total population of your District has increased during the year by 90, the number of live births was the same as in 1937, giving a slightly lower birth rate of 16.71 per 1,000 of population.

There is a definite increase in Still-births for 1938. These number 18, as against 7 in the previous year. This increase may be related to the as yet incomplete development of maternity-nursing services in your area.

Whilst the number of deaths from cancer and heart disease still remains high, it is gratifying to note that no deaths have occurred during the year from puerperal causes.

The infant death rate is higher than previously. This might be considerably reduced if Infant Welfare Centres were established where they are most needed. There is no Centre, as yet, in Marshland.

As regards Housing conditions, it is safe to say that your area compares very favourably with other Rural Districts. During 1938, your Council erected 26 houses, and 88 were built by private enterprise.

There were no major epidemics during the year. Of the 30 diphtheria cases, two died. Special attention is now being directed towards immunisation, with a view to avoiding these deaths which, now, can be so surely prevented.

During 1938, there was much less scarlet fever than previously, all of the mild type.

It would appear that a potent source of rural outbreaks of scarlet fever is the "carrier-state" which develops after what is often regarded as an ordinary septic throat.

In conclusion, I wish to express appreciation of the co-operation and assistance given in public health matters by all those medical practitioners who work in the Marshland area.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

WM. W. WILDMAN, M.B., Ed., D.P.H., Lond.,

May 31st, 1939.

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

- (a) MEDICAL.—Dr. A. J. Hawes, M.B., D.P.H., relinquished his appointment as your part-time Medical Officer of Health in September, 1938.

Your present Medical Officer took up duty on October 1st, 1938, is engaged in whole-time public health work, and holds the following combined appointment:—

Medical Officer of Health to Marshland Rural District Council.

Downham Rural District Council.

Downham Urban District Council.

and Assistant Medical Officer to the Norfolk County Council.

- (b) OTHER.—One Chief Sanitary Inspector and one newly-appointed additional Sanitary Inspector who took up duty on 12th December, 1938.

SECTION A.

1. GENERAL STATISTICS.—

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	49,980
Population (estimated mid 1938)	...			...	15,380
Number of inhabited houses (end 1938)	...			...	4,456
Rateable value of Rural District	...			...	£34,096
Product of a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£148

2. VITAL STATISTICS.—

						England and Wales	
Live Births	Legitimate	Total	M.	F.	Birth Rate per 1,000 of population=	16.71...	15.1
	Illegitimate	248	125	123			
		9	6	3			
Stillbirths	...	...	18	10	8	Rate per 1,000 total (live & still) births= 65.27	
Deaths	...	...	...	180	99	81	Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population=11.70 ... 11.6
Deaths from Puerperal Causes :—							
			Deaths.		Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births		
Puerperal sepsis...	...	Nil	Nil		Nil	...	0.86
Other puerperal causes...		Nil	Nil		Nil	...	2.11
		—	—		—		—
		Nil	Nil		Nil		2.97
		—	—		—		—
Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—							
All infants per 1,000 live births					...	54.47	53
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births...					...	56.45	
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 Illegitimate live births					...	Nil	
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)					...	33	
,, ,, Measles (all ages)					...	Nil	
,, ,, Whooping Cough (all ages)					...	Nil	
,, ,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years)					...	1	
Rate per 1,000 Live Births...					...	3.89	5.50

CAUSES OF DEATHS :—

					M.	F.
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	0	2
Tuberculosis (respiratory)	...	...	...	...	2	5
Other Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	2	0
Cancer...	...	...	...	...	22	11
Cerebral hæmorrhage	...	...	...	...	6	5
Heart disease...	...	...	...	...	22	29
Other circulatory diseases	...	...	...	...	5	2
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	5	1
Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	...	6	6
Peptic ulcer	...	...	...	...	0	2
Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	1	0
Liver diseases (not cirrhosis)	...	...	...	...	2	0
Other digestive diseases	...	...	...	...	2	3
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	2	0
Congenital debility, prematurity	...	...	...	...	7	1
Senility	...	...	...	...	0	2
Suicide...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Other violence	...	...	...	...	6	1
Other defined diseases	...	...	...	...	7	9

SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

There were no changes in either of these as compared with the previous year.

SECTION B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

HOSPITALS AND CLINICS.—The two Hospitals serving your area are The West Norfolk and King's Lynn General Hospital (also a V.D. Centre) and the Wisbech Isolation Hospital.

With the great improvement, in recent years, of travelling facilities, more and more medical cases are able to obtain treatment in the London and Cambridge Hospitals.

AMBULANCE.—The Wisbech and District Ambulance, stationed at Wisbech, serves your area.

CLINICS.—There are no Clinics or Infant Welfare Centres in the Marshland Rural District, other than a Minor Ailment Clinic at Terrington Central School. This Clinic is run by the Norfolk Education Committee, and your Medical Officer attends once a month.

Owing to the large number of children under 5 years of age in your area there is ample scope for the provision of an Infant Welfare Centre near the larger villages.

LABORATORY WORK.—Most of this is undertaken by the Norfolk County Council in their Laboratory at Norwich; the following specimens were examined during 1938, in respect of Marshland Rural District :—

	Positive	Negative	Total
Swabs for Diphtheria...	25	38	63
Sputa for Tb.	6	12	18
Stool for Typhoid ...	—	1	1
Pleural effusion examn.	—	1	1
			—
			83
			—

SECTION C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER.—There were no additions of watermains during the year. The two sources of supply are Marham (Wisbech Water Works Company) and King's Lynn. The latter supply is distributed to the northern part of Marshland via the new pumping station at Clenchwarton.

The Marham supply was examined chemically and bacteriologically at the source in March, 1938, and found to be of excellent quality for all domestic purposes.

No action has been necessary during the year to prevent river or stream pollution.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.—WET REFUSE.—There is no sewerage scheme in the Marshland area.

DRY REFUSE.—Every parish is now scavenged. The three remaining parishes of Walpole St. Peter, Marshland St. James and Tilney All Saints were added to the scavenging area during the year.

SCHOOLS.—All have mains-water supply except the following two:—Tilney St. Lawrence, Marshland Fen.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. J. T. Dewhurst, reports as follows:—

NUISANCES.—

Number of premises inspected	...	...	...	...	...	120
„ „ notices served	...	...	...	...	...	52
„ complied with	...	...	...	...	...	48

NEW BUILDINGS.—

Inspections made	...	...	...	...	...	220
Number of new houses (including bungalows built during year)...	99

SCHOOLS.—

Inspections made	42
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WATER SUPPLY.--

Inspections made	320
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KNACKERS ACT.—

Licenses granted	1
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FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.—

Number of inspections	24
„ „ written notices	4
„ „ prosecutions	...	...	...	...	...	Nil

DEFECTS FOUND AND REMEDIED.

Want of drainage	...	...	...	...	...	1
Other nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	3
Prosecutions	...	...	...	...	...	Nil

There are no swimming baths or camping sites in your area.

SECTION D. HOUSING.

A systematic and comprehensive survey of all the unfit houses in the Marshland Rural District, was commenced in December, 1938, your Medical Officer and Chief Sanitary Inspector working in close co-operation.

This survey is now nearing completion and will be reported on in the next Annual Report.

THE FOLLOWING DETAILS REFER TO THE YEAR 1938.

1. INSPECTION OF HOUSES DURING YEAR.

(1) (a) Total number of houses inspected for defects (under Public Health Acts or Housing Acts)	136
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	240
(2) (a) Number of houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	62
(b) Number of inspections made for purpose	110
(3) Number of houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	1
(4) Number of houses (excluding (3)) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	49

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority	42
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3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING YEAR.

(a) *Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of Housing Act, 1936.*

(1) Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	8
(2) Number rendered fit after service of formal notice :	
(a) By owners	8
(b) By Local Authority in default	0

(b) *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	54
(2) Number of houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice :	
(a) By owners	49
(b) By Local Authority in default	0

(c) *Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of Housing Act, 1936.*

(1) Number of houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	1
(2) Number of houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	0

(d) *Proceedings under Section 12 of Housing Act, 1936* ... Nil

4. HOUSING ACT, 1936. OVERCROWDING.

(a) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of year ...	54
(2) Number of families dwelling therein	54
(3) Number of persons dwelling therein	344
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during year	6
(c) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during year	19
(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases	90

5. NUMBER OF NEW HOUSES BUILT DURING YEAR.

(a) Under Housing Acts, by Local Authority	26
(b) By private enterprise	88

SECTION E. FOOD INSPECTION.

No adulteration of any foodstuff was detected during the year.

A. MILK.	Number of farms and dairies inspected	...	...	180
	Number of samples taken ...	...	...	98
	Number of cowkeepers registered	...	...	103
	Number of premises	„	...	103
	Number of retailers	„	...	41
	Number of accredited producers	...	...	16
B. MEAT.	Number of registered slaughterhouses	...	...	15

The number of carcasses inspected and condemned is shown in the following table :—

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	<i>Cattle ex-</i>			<i>Sheep and</i>		
	<i>cluding Cows. Cows. Calves.</i>			<i>Lambs. Pigs.</i>		
Number killed	—	—	—	—
Number inspected	120	6	Nil.	30
All diseases except Tuberculosis.						
Whole carcasses condemned			3	1	—	4
Some part or organ only			10	1	—	20
Tuberculosis only.						
Whole carcasses	2	1	—	2
Part only	8	2	—	16

SECTION F. INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

With the exception of Scarlet Fever, the incident of infectious disease in your District remained much the same as in the previous year.

There were only 33 cases of Scarlet Fever in 1938 as compared with 75 in 1937.

The type of Scarlet Fever now prevalent is mostly mild, and many of these cases can be satisfactorily isolated at home.

Cases notified during 1938 :—

<i>Disease.</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Admitted to</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Notified.</i>	<i>Hospital.</i>	<i>Deaths.</i>
Scarlet Fever ...	33	18	0
Diphtheria ...	30	24	2
Enteric Fever ...	2	2	0
Pneumonia ...	15	0	12
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	3	0	0
Erysipelas ...	4	0	0
Encephalitis lethargica ...	1	0	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	0	0

The age distribution of these cases is as follows :—

	Under 1	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	45—	Over 65
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0	3	3	17	6	2	2	0	0	0
Diphtheria	0	1	1	1	1	8	7	4	4	2	0	0
Enteric Fever	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
Pneumonia	1	0	0	0	1	3	1	1	3	0	5	0

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1938 :—

			New Cases.				Deaths.			
			Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
Age	Periods		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	...	—	—	—
1	—	—	1	—	...	—	1	—
5	—	—	—	2	...	—	—	—
15	1	1	—	3	...	—	1	—
25	2	1	1	1	...	—	1	—
35	1	—	—	—	...	—	—	—
45	—	1	—	—	...	—	2	—
55	2	—	—	—	...	—	—	—
65	—	—	—	—	...	2	—	—